



# A Comparative Guide to Obtaining a Special Education Teaching Certificate in Pennsylvania

## EMERGENCY PERMIT TYPE 01 AND INTERN CERTIFICATION

In Pennsylvania, individuals can begin teaching special education while working toward full certification. This comparison highlights key requirements and distinctions between an Emergency Permit Type 01 and Intern Certification.

### WHAT IS THE DEFINITION?

Pennsylvania's [Type 01 Emergency Permit](#) is used for a position that will exceed 20 consecutive days in a single assignment and the local education agency (LEA) anticipates future employment for the position.

The official name of Type 01 is *Vacant Position with an Educational Obligation to Pursue Certification*.

The holder of a Type 01 Emergency Permit must enroll in an approved Educator Preparation Program (EPP) in special education.

Pennsylvania's [Teacher Intern Certification](#) is a professional certificate that entitles the holder to fill a full-time professional teaching position. The intern program is an alternate route to certification issued through an approved Pennsylvania Education Preparation Program (EPP) provider.

The certificate holder works as a paid, full-time "teacher of record" in an LEA and teaches coursework within the scope of the special education certification.

The candidate must also enroll in and attend an approved teacher intern preparation program (EPP).

### WHO IS QUALIFIED FOR THIS PATHWAY?

An individual with a bachelor's degree.

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### WHAT'S THE FIRST STEP IN THE PROCESS?

Apply for a teaching position and get hired by a local education agency (LEA), including:

- Approved private school
- Career technical center
- Charter school
- Cyber charter school
- Intermediate unit
- School district

Pass the required Praxis exams. Special education candidates take a minimum of two tests:

1. **Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge (5511).** The passing score is 150.
2. **A Content Area Test** based on the special education certification you are seeking (See list on page 4).

*Note: The Fundamental Subjects Test (5511) is only required for candidates seeking their first Pennsylvania certificate. If they already hold PA certification, the 5511 test is not required.*

*There is a cost for each test you take. To learn more, visit [Special Education Testing Requirements](#).*

## HOW DOES THE PROCESS CONTINUE?

A permit is requested by the LEA for a position that will exceed 20 consecutive days in a single assignment when the LEA anticipates future employment for the position for someone meeting the requirements of §49.12 Eligibility.\*

The commitment of the candidate to enroll in an approved EPP is required for the LEA to request the emergency permit.

1. Apply for a teaching position and get hired by an LEA, including:
  - Approved private school
  - Career technical center
  - Charter school
  - Cyber charter school
  - Intermediate unit
  - School district
2. Enroll in an approved EPP (see below).

## WHO COMPLETES THE APPLICATION?

The teacher candidate initiates the permit request through the [Teacher Information Management System \(TIMS\)](#), Pennsylvania's online certification system.

The LEA completes the application.

The teacher candidate completes the intern certification application through the [Teacher Information Management System \(TIMS\)](#), Pennsylvania's online certification system.

The EPP verifies program enrollment through TIMS, and PDE issues the intern certificate.

## HOW LONG IS IT VALID?

The permit is valid for one academic year, from the first day of the month of issuance until July 31 of the academic year of issuance.

- A second reissuance and all subsequent reissuances may be requested with proof of nine preparation program credits.
- A permit may be reissued one time after the program is completed for testing purposes if the test(s) has been attempted in the previous year. The LEA must alert PDE that the permit is being requested based on testing.

The certificate is valid for three years of service (not calendar years).

The certificate cannot be renewed.

*\*§ 49.12. Eligibility. In accordance with sections 1109, 1202 and 1209 of the Act (24 P.S. § § 11-1109, 12-1202 and 12-1209), every professional employee certified or permitted to serve in the schools of this Commonwealth shall:*

- i. Be of good moral character.*
- ii. Be at least 18 years of age.*
- iii. Except in the case of the Resource Specialist Permit, Career and Technical Emergency Permit, Career and Technical Instructional Intern Certificate, and Career and Technical Instructional Certificate, have earned a baccalaureate degree.*
- iv. For the purposes of certification, the Department will accept a conferred graduate degree from an accredited college or university in lieu of a baccalaureate degree.*

## WHAT EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS ARE APPROVED?

There are multiple programs approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for special education certifications:

- Hearing Impaired (PK-12)
- Special Education (PK-12)
- Speech Language Impaired (PK-12)
- Visually Impaired (PK-12)

Refer to the programs listed under the section, [Instructional Certification Programs](#), when considering applying to programs.

There are multiple programs approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for special education intern certifications:

- Special Education (PK-12)
- Speech Language Impaired (PK-12)

Refer to the programs listed under the section, [Teacher Intern Certification Programs](#), when considering applying to programs.

## WHAT COURSES ARE REQUIRED?

Courses vary by program.

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## HOW MANY COURSES ARE REQUIRED?

Credit requirements are based on the date of the initial emergency permit issuance following the timeline below:

- August 1 – November 30: 6 Program Credits
- December 1 – March 31: 3 Program Credits
- April 1 – July 31: Proof of Program Enrollment

Second reissuance and all subsequent reissuances may be requested with proof of nine preparation program credits completed per year.

The number of courses required for certification is determined by the EPP.

With an intern certification, a minimum of nine credits per year must be completed with the intention that all program requirements will be completed within three years.

## IS STUDENT TEACHING REQUIRED?

Yes.

Yes. It's completed as part of the intern program.

## WHAT SUPPORT IS PROVIDED TO THE TEACHER CANDIDATE?

The teacher candidate will participate in ongoing professional development in compliance with 22 Pa. Code 49.16.

Additional support provided to the candidate is dependent on the employing LEA and EPP.

[Intermediate Units](#) and [PaTTAN](#) offer resources and trainings to meet the needs of special education personnel.

A minimum of one classroom observation will be conducted each month by an approved college/university for the initial year.

The teacher candidate is observed twice annually by the employing LEA.

Additional support provided to the candidate is dependent on the employing LEA and EPP.

[Intermediate Units](#) and [PaTTAN](#) offer resources and trainings to meet the needs of special education personnel.

## HOW IS PK-12 SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER CERTIFICATION ACHIEVED?

Completion of required coursework, student teaching, program recommendation, and passing the required Praxis exams. Special education candidates take a minimum of two tests:

1. **Fundamental Subjects: Content Knowledge (5511).** The passing score is 150.
2. **A Content Area Test** based on the special education certification you are seeking (See list below).

*Note: The Fundamental Subjects Test (5511) is only required for candidates seeking their first Pennsylvania certificate. If they already hold PA certification, the 5511 test is not required.*

Completion of the required coursework through the approved EPP, with program recommendation, within three years of certificate issuance.

## HOW IS A TEACHING CERTIFICATE AWARDED?

Apply for the Instructional I Certificate through the Teacher Information Management System (TIMS). [View the Application and User Guides.](#)

*There is a cost to apply. The processing time to receive your certificate can vary. Processing takes approximately one week. For more information on the processing time, visit [Certification Services](#) on the PDE website.*

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### Special Education Content Area Tests:

- ✓ **Hearing Impaired (PK-12): Education of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students (5272)**  
Passing Score: 160
- ✓ **Speech & Language Impaired (PK-12): Speech Language Pathology (5331)**  
Passing Score: 162
- ✓ **Special Education (PK-12): Foundational Knowledge (5355)**  
Passing Score: 145
- ✓ **Visually Impaired (PK-12): Teaching Students With Visual Impairments (5282)**  
Passing Score: 163

*There is a cost for each test you take. For more information, visit [Special Education Testing Requirements](#).*

### Resources

[CSPG 64 - Teacher Intern \(Instructional\) \(Non-Career and Technical\) \(pa.gov\)](#)

[CSPG 13 - Emergency Permits \(pa.gov\)](#)

